

Political Science 11

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Fall Quarter 2009

MW 9:00 - 9:50, plus sections

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INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Objectives and Approach

This course is an introduction to comparative politics, which involves the study of politics in other countries as well as cross-national comparisons. The course is designed around the issues of democracy and political development and has two major objectives: (1) promoting systematic and comparative thinking about politics, and (2) fostering knowledge and understanding of the politics of three countries: Great Britain, Russia, and Nigeria. The readings, lectures, and sections will in large part focus on these countries. We shall examine each country's social background and political history, the behavior of citizens and groups, political institutions, and public policy challenges.

Course Assignments and Grading

Assignments include a brief quiz, an in-class midterm, one relatively short paper on a topic given by the instructor (you will have some choice), and a comprehensive final examination. Class and section attendance is required, and you will be responsible for all lecture materials. In-class tests will include both objective and essay questions. For students whose final exam grades are better than their average for the midterm and paper, the final will count 50% and each of the other two assignments 25%, before adjustment for participation (see below). In the opposite case, each major assignment will count one-third. The quiz will count as part of the midterm. Finally, grades will be adjusted, upward or downward, for section participation and contributions (10% of the final course grade). Students who fail to complete the midterm, the paper, and/or the final examination will not pass the course. Late papers will be penalized. Incompletes or special exams will be given only in situations of *emergency* or *recognized disability* in accordance with UCSD policy. Petitions must be *timely* and *properly documented*.

Academic Honesty

Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, and any dishonest behavior is a serious violation. UCSD rules concerning academic dishonesty are spelled out in the General Catalog. Note the strict prohibition against plagiarism: submitting as your own or without proper attribution work done wholly or in part by another person. Plagiarism includes unauthorized collaboration on course assignments. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course are *individual*, and no collaboration with any other person is permitted. In-class tests are *closed-book*, with no aids allowed. These rules will be strictly enforced, and any case of academic dishonesty will be reported for disciplinary action.

Books and Materials

The following books have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore. All readings are required and will be placed on Library reserve. Avoid old editions of Almond or Kotkin.

Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Russell J. Dalton, and Kaare Strøm, eds., *Comparative Politics Today*. Updated 9th edition. Pearson Longman, 2010 (hereafter: Almond).

Anthony Gamble, *Between Europe and America: The Future of British Politics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Steven Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*. Updated edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Robert Guest, *The Shackled Continent: Power, Corruption, and African Lives*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Books, 2004.

Sections

Generally, you will have two lectures per week and one section, led by one of the teaching assistants: Molly Bauer (W 10 and 12), Robert Bond (Th 11 and 1), and Devesh Tiwari (F 9 and 11). The TAs will announce their office hours and contact information. **Please make sure to attend the section for which you are registered.**

Calendar

Tentatively, the quiz has been scheduled for October 19, the midterm for November 2, and the paper is due on November 20. The **final exam will be given between 8:00 and 10:59 am on Wednesday, December 9** (Note: The exam is likely to be scheduled for two hours only). All dates and assignments are subject to change by announcement in class.

COURSE OUTLINE

September 28 – October 14: THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICS

Readings: Almond, chs. 1-7.

Class Schedule:

September 28: Comparative Politics: What and Why? (Almond, chs. 1-2)
September 30: Governments, States and Nations (Almond, chs. 1-3)
October 5: Government: Blessing or Pest? Public Policy (Almond, ch. 7)
October 7: Crafting the Ideal Government? Constitutions and Political Institutions (Almond, ch. 6)
October 12: Choosing Leaders: Elections and Political Parties (Almond, ch. 5)
October 14: Mobilizing for Influence: Interest Groups (Almond, ch. 4)

October 19 – 28: THE UNITED KINGDOM

Readings: Almond, ch. 8; Gamble, entire.

Class Schedule:

October 19: The Old-Fashioned British (Almond, pp. 152-63; Gamble, chs. 1-2); **QUIZ**
October 21: The Westminster Model: Winner Takes All (Almond, pp. 164-82; Gamble, chs. 3 and 7)
October 26: The Politics of Class (Almond, pp. 182-93; Gamble, ch. 4)
October 28: Britain from Thatcher to Brown (Almond, pp. 193-99; Gamble, chs. 5-6, 8-10)

November 2: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

November 4 - 18: RUSSIA

Readings: Almond, ch. 12; Kotkin, entire.

Class Schedule:

November 4: Russia and the Totalitarian Experience (Almond, pp. 354-60; Kotkin, Introduction and ch. 1)
November 9: How Soviet Communism Died (Almond, pp. 360-62; Kotkin, chs. 2-4)
November 11: Veterans' Day – No Class Meeting
November 16: Yeltsin and the New Russian State (Almond, pp. 362-86; Kotkin, chs. 5-7 and Epilogue)
November 18: Putin and Medvedev: Back to Autocracy? (Almond, pp. 386-99)

November 20: PAPER DUE

November 23 - December 2: NIGERIA

Readings: Almond, ch. 18; Guest, Introduction, chs. 2-8, and Conclusion.

Class Schedule:

November 23: Nigeria and the African Continent (Almond, pp. 654-65; Guest, Introduction)
November 25: Social Fractures and the Resource Curse (Almond, pp. 666-76; Guest, ch. 5)
November 30: A Fragile Democracy (Almond, pp. 676-93; Guest, chs. 2, 6, and 7)
December 2: The Trouble with Nigeria (Almond, pp. 693-705; Guest, chs. 3-4, 8, and Conclusion)

December 9: FINAL EXAMINATION